



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
**PROBATION DEPARTMENT**

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ROBERT B. TAYLOR  
CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER

May 19, 2006

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Robert B. Taylor   
Chief Probation Officer

SUBJECT: **FY 2006-07 UNMET NEEDS**

With my recent appointment to the position of Chief Probation Officer, one of my immediate goals is to identify those key areas within the Probation Department that require improvement to enhance safety and security-related operations as well as the delivery of services to our juvenile and adult populations. The Department's FY 2006-07 unmet critical needs consist of \$163.9 million necessary to:

- 1) Address security needs at the juvenile halls and camps that would provide for a safer and more secure environment for detained minors as well as ensure the safety of personnel and the public (\$115.1 million);
- 2) Fully implement juvenile institutions needs, including the camp redesign concept as envisioned by my predecessor, Mr. Paul Higa, to enable the camps to be focused on residential treatment, accountability, rehabilitation and transition, thereby, providing youth an opportunity to return home better prepared to be law-abiding and productive (\$22.6 million); and
- 3) Implement an effective departmental reorganization that will not only address the imminent span of supervision problem, however, one that will enable far more effective management of operations and an expected improvement in service delivery outcomes to our juvenile and adult populations as well as the community (\$26.2 million).

**Overview**

Although this request represents a significant amount of funds and may at first appear to be unrealistic, we have prepared it in good faith. Understandably, the magnitude of this request is due to the cumulative and systemic result of the Department not being able to address issues with a long-term solution, and instead, using a "band-aid"

approach – this has been due primarily to the ongoing County- and statewide fiscal constraints and other competing priorities occurring over the past two decades.

While a total makeover of our camps and halls is necessary and would be cost prohibitive, we recognize that this is an extensive and complicated issue to synthesize all requirements. We are preparing a preliminary spending plan based on our currently identified unmet needs that could be phased-in over the next couple of years.

We are also mid-way into the process of updating our strategic plan and have hired a consultant, Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc., (MIG) to assist with this effort. As part of this process, we have identified key stakeholders who have been meeting with MIG representatives and have obtained preliminary findings of repeated and common conclusion regarding our juvenile population – the Department needs additional resources to be able to focus on developing a balanced service delivery approach and evaluation of services, including providing prevention services, case assessment, treatment, and aftercare services, and not merely providing supervision services and being an extension of juvenile halls.

In addition, although we believe that security enhancements for the halls and camps are our first priority, the success to turning the Department around is imperatively contingent on having the ability to proceed with implementing our institutions' redesign and reorganization of the Department.

The following identifies additional information of the key operational issues that resulted in this request and anticipated outcomes.

### **I. JUVENILE HALLS & CAMPS SECURITY ENHANCEMENTS**

**Issue:** Although in recent years, the Department has received funding allocations to address some security needs, we have a continued need for significant security enhancements at the juvenile halls and camps, primarily due to a lack of funding throughout the course of the years.

As indicated in our May 4, 2006 Board memorandum related to the March 23, 2006 Barry J. Nidorf juvenile hall escapes, we have prepared a report under separate cover which delineates our needs assessment and a proposed plan developed in collaboration with the Chief Administrative Office and the Office of Public Safety.

#### ***Anticipated Outcomes:***

- ✓ The primary and critical need is to provide a safer and more secure environment for the minors under our care and custody and their families, as well as our department personnel, contract staff and volunteers.

- ✓ Implementation of security enhancements may also reduce youth-on-youth violence.

## **II. JUVENILE INSTITUTIONS REDESIGN**

**Issue:** As indicated by Mr. Higa in his development of the camp redesign proposal, it is clear that the camp program has evolved in far too many instances especially in the last few years to be merely an extension of juvenile hall and focused on providing temporary detention. This has occurred in part due to the reductions in level of staffing for supervision and case management and the reduced contracted community-based services that previously supplemented programs. Compounding this was attempting to provide services to a more difficult, complex youth population – often those with serious mental health issues, gang entrenchment, assaultive behavior and major conduct disorder, who were entering camp without the availability of the needed mental health services.

There is a prevalence of youth with multi-faceted needs in our institutions. As indicated in our memorandum of May 4, 2006, in reviewing a profile of the currently detained youth population in comparison with youth of approximately 10 years ago based primarily on criminal offense information, we identified the following as key factors in contributing to the change in the profile of juvenile hall and camp offenders.

- Increasingly criminally-sophisticated offenders;
- Challenged population with increased mental health needs;
- Reduction in State Division of Juvenile Justice (formerly, California Youth Authority) youth commitments;
- Enactment of Juvenile Crime Prevention Act of 2000 (Proposition 21); and
- Increase in female offenders

### ***Anticipated Outcomes:***

- ✓ Reducing recidivism through the application of 'What Works' evidenced-based practices, such as Aggression Replacement Therapy, Multi-Systemic Therapy, and Family Functional Therapy.
- ✓ Enhancement of camp-specific services to address minors' special needs for intervention and skill building, including health, mental health, gang intervention, gender-specific and substance abuse prevention.
- ✓ Improved results in small group settings;
- ✓ Empowering youth to become self-sufficient; and
- ✓ Improving the opportunity for family reunification and increased educational and literacy outcomes.

### **III. DEPARTMENT REORGANIZATION**

**Issue:** The Department operates in silos and undertakes a reactionary approach to addressing issues which is exacerbated by the unmanageable span of supervision level.

#### ***Anticipated Outcomes:***

- ✓ Will address the span of supervision issue.
- ✓ Provides for a more coherent structure by moving towards a managerial style of operations and strategic direction, in-lieu of being reactionary.
- ✓ Improved collaboration with external stakeholders by having a reasonable amount of staff attend numerous meetings involving other departments and outside agencies, thus, enabling our managers and line staff to better engage with our stakeholders and increase participation.
- ✓ Significant improvement in service delivery, accountability and oversight while paving the way for achieving long-term structural and cultural change.

Supporting documentation for this request is being provided to the CAO. I appreciate your time and consideration of this request.

Please call me if you have any questions, or your staff may contact Robert Smythe, Chief, Administrative Services Bureau, at (562) 940-2516.

RBT:RS

c: Sachi A. Hamai, Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors  
David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer